



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

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October 20, 2009

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Jonathan E. Fielding, M.D., M.P.H. *JEF*
Director and Health Officer

SUBJECT: **PANDEMIC INFLUENZA H1N1 AND SEASONAL FLU PLANNING –
UPDATE #4**

This is a follow-up to the October 1, 2009 report to provide an update on the preparation and planning activities for pandemic H1N1 influenza (H1N1) and seasonal influenza conducted by the Department of Public Health (DPH).

DPH Planning Activities

DPH planning efforts continue as thousands of doses of the H1N1 vaccine are expected to be delivered this week. Ongoing planning efforts include:

- Finalizing remaining contracts for the H1N1 response;
- Data mapping and evaluation planning for the H1N1 efforts;
- Operational planning for personal protection equipment (PPE) and anti-viral allocation and distribution; and
- Updating influenza model plan to include recent epidemiological, hospitalization, and mortality data.

On October 19, 2009, DPH initiated the Incident Command Structure (ICS) Department Operations Center (DOC) in order to centralize all DPH H1N1 activities. The DOC will serve as a command center for key personnel working on the H1N1 response.

Outreach

With the arrival of the H1N1 vaccine in Los Angeles County, DPH will continue to reach out to the media and the public to reinforce the messages of prevention and vaccine eligibility. Some of the key efforts underway are:

- Training additional 211 operators to handle calls from the public regarding the H1N1 vaccine;
- Continuing to fill requests for the DPH speaker's bureau to provide informational talks and trainings on H1N1 for community and clinical groups throughout the county;

- Publicizing the H1N1 vaccine clinics schedule through October 2009. On October 23, 2009, DPH will hold a press event at the first vaccine clinic to be held in Los Angeles County; and
- Using media events to reiterate the importance of prevention and vaccination. On October 13, 2009, DPH held a press event to announce the arrival the Live Attenuated Intranasal Vaccine (LAIV) or FluMist H1N1 vaccine in Los Angeles County.
- Special efforts have been undertaken to reaching out to the Spanish language media, including Univision, Telemundo, La Opinion and Azteca, and to other ethnic media.

H1N1 Vaccine

During the first week in October, the first H1N1 vaccine to arrive in Los Angeles County was in the form of nasal mist. This was distributed to 241 private providers (a total 46,700 doses) in the County. It is anticipated that during the week of October 19, 2009, approximately 256,000 doses of multi-dose and nasal mist vaccine will arrive at DPH and providers' offices across the county. However, there have been, and will continue to be, some unforeseen delays in vaccine availability. Flexibility in the planning and implementation of the vaccine distribution strategies will continue to be important in the upcoming weeks.

The vaccine distribution process is complex and forecasting how much vaccine will be available at a certain time is challenging as vaccine amounts will vary from week to week. Millions of doses of vaccine are in the pipeline and DPH is working closely with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the State Immunization Branch to get vaccine out to the public as soon as it arrives.

With regard to the safety of the 2009 H1N1 vaccines, they have not been associated with any unexpected adverse events (or possible side effects). In addition, the 2009-2010 seasonal influenza vaccines have not been associated with any unexpected adverse events (or possible side effects).

Los Angeles County H1N1 Morbidity Update

Respiratory illness/influenza activity has continued to increase since September.

- Reported outbreaks are significantly higher than previous years; elementary school outbreaks are most common.
- Outbreak reports continue to be highest from the San Fernando and San Gabriel Valleys.
- The level of influenza like illness (ILI) in emergency rooms is higher than normally seen at this time of year, especially in those aged 5-14 years.
- As of October 8, 2009 there have been 132 intensive care unit (ICU) admissions and 57 deaths due to confirmed H1N1.

Seasonal Influenza Planning

DPH began operation of its seasonal flu clinics on September 22, 2009 and will continue to hold clinics while the supplies last. The clinic schedule is available on the DPH website at www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/ip/flu/index.htm. Small amounts of the seasonal flu vaccine will be available at H1N1 vaccine events for those individuals who may request seasonal flu vaccine.

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The limited supply of seasonal flu vaccine is due the delays in the shipments by the supplier, Sanofi Pasteur. It could be as late as November before DPH receives the complete order of seasonal flu vaccine. The CDC is working with manufacturers, states, and immunization providers to identify existing seasonal flu vaccine and distribute it to government agencies and providers.

We will continue to keep you apprised as H1N1 planning and response activities progress. If you have any questions or need additional information, please let me know.

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c: Chief Executive Officer
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